

**Minutes of the Meeting
October 15, 1998**

Projects Reviewed

Arboretum Master Plan
Central Area Senior Center
WSCTC Expansion (MOHI)

Convened: 1:00pm

Adjourned: 5:00pm

Commissioners Present

Moe Batra
Carolyn Darwish
Bob Foley
Gerald Hansmire
Jon Layzer
Barbara Swift

Staff Present

Vanessa Murdock
Peter Aylsworth
Rebecca Walls

101598.1 Project: **Arboretum Master Plan**
 Phase: Update
 Presenters: Donald Harris, Parks and Recreation
 Attendees: Paul Gibson, Montlake Community Council, Arboretum Park
 Preservation Coalition
 Time: .75 hr. (0.3%)

The current Master Plan proposal was developed by the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee with funding from the Arboretum Foundation. Since the plan was issued in October 1997, the Committee has been considering modifications to the Plan in response to community concerns prior to preceding through the EIS process. These concerns were focused on the issues of an education component, a perceived shift of balance from park to horticultural collection, and proposed construction of new buildings and parking areas. An extensive public process will begin in the autumn of 1998 in an attempt to solicit broad public comment on the Plan and the future of the Arboretum. The revised plan will be subject to another formal environmental review process in the form of an Environmental Impact Statement to be developed in 1999.

The current version of the Master Plan is available on the world wide web at
www.ci.seattle.wa.us/parks/arboretum/cover.htm

Discussion:

- Batra:** Is the balance of uses shifting toward becoming a horticultural collection or more of a public park?
- Harris:** It is a complicated issue. There may be a change in the orientation of the horticultural collections, now organized by species, toward an ecological organization. Many of the collections are nearing the end of their life span. Changes in pedestrian and vehicular circulation have also been proposed. Security and education are also significant issues to be addressed. The community has shown great interest in maintaining the public park character of the arboretum in conjunction with the horticultural collections.
- Swift:** The 1978 Jones and Jones Master Plan seemed to move away from the horticultural collection approach.
- Harris:** The community has supported portions of that plan that haven't yet been realized.
- Swift:** As a professional, it is a difficult facility to use with the variety of infrastructure problems including circulation and maintenance of collections.
- Foley:** The change in collection orientation and location based on ecological issues may result in an increase of native plantings and less exotic plants.
- Hansmire:** I don't remember seeing a grand fountain or other new elements in previous presentations of the Master Plan.
- Harris:** Those elements had probably not been designed at the time of the presentation.
- Foley:** Past presentations seemed to focus on the process rather than the project.
- Harris:** I encourage Design Commission involvement in conjunction with the three other managing entities, the City of Seattle, the University of Washington, and the Arboretum Foundation.
- Hansmire:** The community's concern over a "fence and fee" approach is understandable.
- Harris:** An increase in horticultural collections will result in higher cost. It may be possible to draw on private funding sources.
- Gibson:** The historical integrity of the arboretum is jeopardized by the Master Plan in three major areas, with respect to the Olmsted tradition; the proposed fountain, the Great Lawn, and a complex of four new buildings adjacent to the lawn. These would result in a centralized complex, with parking, over 900 feet long and would

allow for a “fence and fee” system in the future. Combining a public park with significant horticultural collections is not a new concept. Many public parks require people to be respectful of collections while supporting compatible uses. Arguments over the creation of a grand arboretum with world renowned horticultural collections have been going on for decades. The existing Master Plan seems committed to this vision of a world class arboretum and implies that current public uses of the park are unacceptable. The Arboretum Park Preservation Coalition has composed a letter describing the public process and the Jones and Jones Master Plan elements that were not included in the plan.

- Foley:** Is there potential for increased water flow in the Arboretum Creek. The idea seemed to be favorable, but I haven’t heard support for it.
- Gibson:** Increased flow in the creek is one of the positive aspects to the plan. There may be drainage issues to address, but the idea is aesthetically appealing. We have a beautiful park and a decent arboretum. Various leadership groups have ambitions for a stupendous, world class arboretum that will increase institutional attention.
- Harris:** There are many opportunities for the Design Commission to become involved in this project.
- Hansmire:** I am pleased that the department will revisit the planning process. The goals and objectives weren’t well developed or discussed. It will be important to reestablish them early in this process.
- Harris:** The current Master Plan went through an intense public process, although the public concerns may not have been adequately addressed.
- Swift:** Institutions have a tendency to think they need “world class facilities” when feeling insecure or provincial. I hope we have moved beyond that in the way we value the arboretum. I hope that those involved in this planning effort can conduct a mature and refined analysis of what is actually valued and needed in this project and community. The Commission can serve as a neutral venue for discussing delicate issues.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the update briefing and desires a presentation of the project after the public workshop information has been compiled and prior to the commencement of design.**

101598.2 Project: **Central Area Senior Center**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Donald King, Donald King Architects
 Robert Snyder, Executive Services Department
 Time: .25 hr. (0.3%)

The renovation of the Central Area Senior Center was originally scoped to include exterior alterations to the existing building. Based on preliminary cost estimates the scope was revised to consist of interior alterations that would achieve a similar result. The existing Dining Room will be enlarged by removing walls and combining three rooms into one. The main entry lobby will be remodeled and interior floor, wall, and ceiling finishes will be replaced. The project is currently under construction and has a budget of \$270,000.

Discussion:

- Batra:** Will the interior renovations result in an increased number of users and subsequent parking issues?
- Snyder:** I don't know if the renovations will result in more users of the facility. Parking is an issue that the current Senior Center users have overcome with van-pools, buses, or transit. They have had to come up with creative solutions for many years due to a lack of parking.
- King:** There are parking spaces within adjacent areas. The surrounding neighborhood has been sensitive to the center's parking needs.
- Foley:** How many similar Senior Center facilities does the city currently own?
- Snyder:** There are three to five different centers within Seattle. All of them operate on minimal city funds and have developed creative solutions to address complex issues.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the briefing and supports the project as an enhancement to the community.**

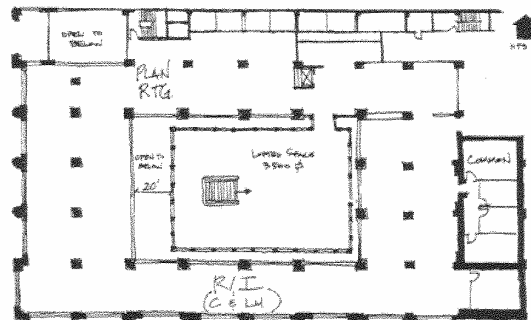
101598.3 Project: **Commission Business**

Action Items:

- A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 1ST MEETING: Approved as amended.

Discussion Items:

- B. SDC LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT POSITION: The Commission forwarded the top candidates to the Mayor.
- C. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH: The new Executive Director position was advertised via local and national papers, fliers, and the City of Seattle website.
- D. DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING PROJECT: Commissioners were invited to the first stakeholders meeting on the Downtown Wayfinding Study.
- E. MADRONA PLAYFIELD CONSULTANT SELECTION: Commissioner Foley participated in the consultant selection process. Four consultant teams were interviewed and the Allworth Design Group was selected.
- F. LIGHT RAIL REVIEW PANEL UPDATE: The panel met on October 14 with Paul Bay, Jared Smith and Deborah Ashlund to outline the work plan and schedule future reviews.
- G. SDC HANDBOOK: The Final Draft is currently being revised and a final Final Draft will be distributed at the November 5th meeting.
- H. BUDGET PROPOSAL: City Council has voiced some concerns regarding the proposed funding mechanism changes and requested additional information.
- I. CENTRAL AREA GATEWAY WORK SHOP: Staff are participating in the planning of two workshops on the Central Area Gateway.
- J. SAND POINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The Committee met on October 14th at the Office of Sand Point Operations. The meeting focused on the review of the transitional housing programs being undertaken at Sand point and site plans for two of the projects that are underway as part of the Phase I of the Housing Renovation Plan. The next SPDRC meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, November 10th and will feature an update on the Magnuson Park master plan process as well as a report on the Historic Preservation 1998 Activity Tracking Matrix.
- K. MAJOR MAINTENANCE ARTICLE: Two articles were distributed to Commissioners regarding major maintenance staff within the Parks Department and Seattle Public Utilities.
- L. Dexter Horton Interior Proposal: The Commission reviewed a preliminary idea for a mezzanine addition within the double-height bank space of the Dexter Horton Building. The lofted space would be connected to the existing mezzanine and would have an independent staircase to the main lobby area. After a short discussion the Commission agreed that such an addition would have negative effects on the character of the space and would not be a preferred solution. The Commission suggested that the space shortage be made up elsewhere in a manner that would retain the historic integrity of the original bank space. Moving the microfilm library to the basement was suggested.



101598.4 Project: **WSCTC Northeast Block (MOHI Development)**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Bruce Donnally, LMN Architects
 Chuck Hartung, WSCTC
 Attendees: John Howell, Museum of History and Industry (MOHI)
 Dan Johnson, WSCTC
 John Nesholm, LMN Architects
 Time: 1 hr. (hourly)

The schematic design phase of the Museum of History and Industry (MOHI) component of the Convention Center Expansion project has been completed. The primary museum entry will be located at the corner of Eighth Avenue and Pike Street with a secondary entrance in the Eighth Avenue tunnel. The first floor will consist of the main lobby, classroom and support spaces, and a historical learning center for educational programs. The second floor will consist of support spaces. The third floor will contain the main exhibition spaces and museum offices, crossing over the existing alley.

The third floor museum spaces will have windows and a glazed display area at the corner of Ninth Avenue and Pike Street. Retail fronts at street level will wrap along Pike Street and along Ninth Avenue, broken only by a garage entrance.



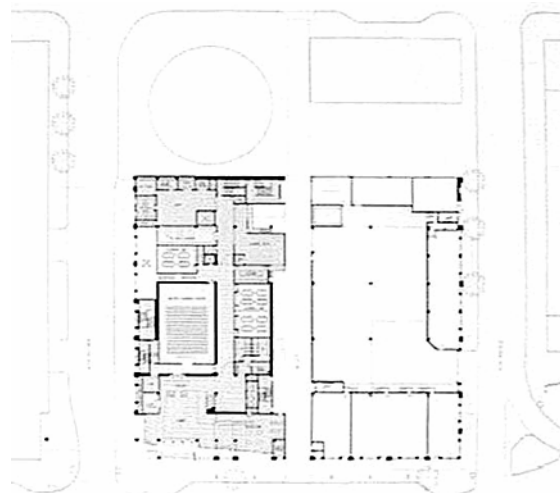
View of main museum entry lobby (8th & Pike)



Third Floor



Second Floor



First Floor

Discussion:

- Darwish:** Will parked busses within the Eighth Avenue tunnel have adverse effects on traffic patterns?
- Hartung:** Busses will not be parked on Eighth Avenue, they will only stop to drop children off at the west entrance of the museum.
- Batra:** What will the northeast block alley be used for?
- Donnally:** The alley will remain open to service vehicles and access to the garage for delivery truck parking.
- Hartung:** The alley will be active and well lit for security reasons. It will remain city property, with an aerial vacation, and will function as a typical alley.
- Foley:** I think the addition of the museum to this development is great. I am curious about what happens to the existing museum space at Montlake.
- Howell:** The ultimate use of the existing facility is still undetermined. Portions of the building will probably continue to be used as storage areas, archival space, and staff offices.
- Swift:** The development of pedestrian scale design elements at street level is extremely important. I presume that they will continue to be developed as the design continues.
- Hartung:** We plan to continue the same level of pedestrian scale, as in other portions of the development, with modulation and articulation.
- Swift:** How does the north elevation relate to the existing tower?
- Hartung:** We have recently reached agreements with the tower owners to install pre-cast inserts of their design in the upper band of detail along the north facade. The facade will be extremely articulated and detailed for an interior block party wall condition. We will also allow the tower owners to install additional lighting and a trellis system for the adjacent tower plaza.
- Layzer:** It is fantastic to see the museum as a participant in this development. I think that the space along Eighth Avenue will be very active and interesting. There is a possibility of the current Convention Place Station being relocated under Pine Street in the Sound Transit development. I encourage you to explore potential options for drawing transit users up from the new tunnel and into this development.
- Hartung:** I haven't heard about that proposal, but would welcome increased pedestrian traffic.
- Donnally:** Increased pedestrian traffic along Eighth Avenue and Pike Street is strongly encouraged. The museum will be the identifiable tenant along Eighth Avenue and around the corner along Pike Street.
- Layzer:** The plan makes sense. Are there any concerns regarding upward circulation to the exhibit spaces?
- Howell:** Upward circulation is common in large museums. The national museum in Victoria, British Columbia is a good example.
- Donnally:** There will also be exhibits starting at street level in the lobby and leading visitors upward to the main exhibit space.
- Darwish:** The single window at the second level on the west facade of the main lobby seems out of place.
- Donnally:** Treatment of that facade has been the subject of discussions and we will continue to develop that corner of the lobby.
- Swift:** I encourage you to explore ways for the activities within the museum to be expressed on the exterior along the street level facades. Subtle references to inside

exhibits could give the pedestrian level a sense of animation and interest. I sense that the current approach is somewhat restrained. Expressing the museum in careful and creative ways could be a terrific opportunity.

Action: The Commission appreciates the thorough presentation and the continued attention to previous comments. The Commission supports the direction of the project as presented in schematic design and makes the following comments and recommendations.

- consider potential opportunities related to the possible location of a Sound Transit tunnel station near the north end of the site;
- further develop the west facade of the main lobby;
- explore opportunities for enlivening the Pike Street facade at street level with displays of museum activities.